

July 1, 2009

To: NITC Commissioners
From: Anne Byers
Subject: eHealth Council report

ARRA Update

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act allocates \$2 billion to the Department of Health and Human Services' Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology for efforts relating to health information technology. Of this allocation, a minimum of \$300 million is to support "regional or sub-national efforts toward health information exchange." Section 13301 (amending Section 3013 of the Public Health Service Act) requires the Secretary of Health And Human Services to establish a grant program to facilitate and expand the exchange of health information in states. Grant funds may be used for:

- Enhancing participation in the exchange of health information
- Identifying state or local resources available to promote health IT
- Complementing other Federal grants, programs, and efforts towards the promotion of health IT
- Providing technical assistance to address barriers to the exchange of health IT
- Promoting effective strategies to utilize health IT in medically underserved communities
- Encouraging clinicians to work with HIT regional extension centers
- Supporting public health agencies use of electronic health information
- Promoting the use of electronic health records for quality improvement

In order to apply for State Grants for Health IT, states must complete a state plan. More information on State Grants for Health IT is expected this summer.

State Plan Update

The eHealth Council's State Plan Work Group has completed an initial draft of a state eHealth Plan for review and comment by internal stakeholders. The plan lays out the state's vision, goals, and objectives. The draft plan will be revised and distributed for public comment by mid-July. A more detailed plan with action items will be developed later. The draft plan is included in the meeting documents.

Members of the State Plan Work Group include:

- Deb Bass and Chris Henkenius, Bass and Associates
- Ken Lawonn, Alegent Health
- Dr. Harris Frankel, NeHII
- Wende Baker, SNBHIN
- Dan Griess, WNHIE and Box Butte General Hospital
- Joyce Beck, SENHIE and Thayer County Health Services
- David Lawton, HHS
- Nancy Shank, Nebraska Public Policy Center
- Jenifer Roberts-Johnson, Dept. of Health and Human Services
- Keith Mueller, UNMC
- Vivianne Chaumont, Dept. of Health and Human Services
- September Stone, Nebraska Health Care Association

Updates on Community Technology Fund Grants

- **The University of Nebraska Public Policy Center** conducted a deliberative discussion and survey on sharing health information electronically on Nov. 17, 2008.
- **NeHII (Nebraska Health Information Initiative)** completed its pilot project June 30. piloting the exchange of health data. A virtual ribbon cutting is planned for April 2.
- **The Southeast Nebraska Health Information Network (SNBHIN)** purchased a server with their grant funds.
- **Western Nebraska Health Information Exchange** is moving ahead with a pilot. Grant funds were used for software for the pilot project.
- **Health Information Security and Privacy Committee (HISPC) Website and Consumer Education Materials** are being developed. Through Nebraska's National HISPC contract with the Office of the National Coordinator, additional funding has been made available for consumer and provider education efforts. Creighton University has been contracted to provide assistance.

Update on Action Items

The eHealth Council discussed action items at its March meeting. The eHealth Council's action items will focus on the development of the state plan and also on health information security and privacy.

Membership Updates

Henry Zach, HDC 4Point Dynamics; Jim Krieger, Gallup, and C.J. Johnson, SNBHIN and Region V Systems have resigned.

Two new members have been nominated:

- Wende Baker, Executive Director of SNBHIN
- Joyce Beck, CEO, Thayer County Health Services

Wende Baker is the Executive Director of the Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Network.

Joyce Beck is the CEO for Thayer County Health Services. She has a Masters of Healthcare Administration, a BS in Healthcare Administration, and an Associate Degree in Nursing Home Administration as well as being an LPN. She has been in health care for 41 years beginning as a nurse aid, later as a nurse, and for the past 19 years as a CEO. Joyce is a member of the CAH-HIT Grant Committee and is responsible for the leadership necessary to implement the changes from a paper environment to an electronic one forming the Southeast Nebraska Health Information Exchange (SENHIE).